## **South Dakota National Guard Public Affairs Office**

Phone: 605-737-6721 Email: ng.sd.sdarng.list.pao@mail.mil

Web: <a href="https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil">https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil</a>

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**



## SD Guard Battalion receives national training, readiness award

By Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen SDNG Public Affairs Office

RAPID CITY, S.D. – The National Guard Association of the United States awarded the South Dakota Army National Guard's 153rd Engineer Battalion the Major General Milton A. Reckord Trophy during the 136th General Conference in Chicago, Illinois, Aug. 25.

The Milton A. Reckord Trophy is awarded to the outstanding battalion in each of the Army areas determined to have the highest level of training and readiness.

"This is confirmation of the outstanding work the Soldiers of the battalion have been doing every day," said Lt. Col. David Dailey, 153rd battalion commander. "It is the national level 'pat on the back' for those that are getting it done at all levels within the organization."

In order to be nominated for the Reckord Trophy, battalion's must demonstrate superior performance in the areas of personnel strength, retention, duty MOS qualification, individual and crew served weapons qualification, the Army Physical Fitness Test, drill weekend attendance and annual training attendance.

"Striving for such an award creates internal competition between the companies that drives their excellence," said Dailey. "No one wants to be the unit that didn't achieve the standard, and with that it's also building battalion team cohesion because we need every unit to earn the award."

Nominated battalions must also have an annual training record rating of excellent or outstanding, with at least two organic or attached units that meet superior unit award criteria.

"Six of our seven units exceeded the requirements for the Superior Unit Award two years in a row," said Lt. Col. Patrick Pardy, battalion commander from 2011-2013. "The battalion was the runner-up for the Reckord Award last year and this year they were able to bring it home.

The Huron-based 153rd provides mission command and supervision for seven units with more than 830 Soldiers in 12 communities throughout South Dakota.

"The people that make up our team are what make this battalion excel," said Dailey. "It is displayed in what they do year-round. It is shown with state active duty during Storm Atlas, or getting ready for Colorado flooding, tornado recovery in Wessington Springs, or flooding in Sioux City. The engineering projects they complete and the logistical missions that support those projects. They love the challenge; they love hard work, and getting things done."

While the recognition is well deserved and appreciated by the Soldiers, both the former and the current commander agree the training and readiness is much more important than trophies and awards.

"The Reckord Trophy and Superior Unit Awards are nice but they are not what are important," said Pardy. "If your Soldiers can do the things that are required for these awards, such as maintain strength, physical fitness, weapons and so on, then they can do what is required of them if they deploy."

"The 153rd can't let down after such an achievement, we need to continue to do what we have done and improve on it and push for continued improvement," said Dailey. "The requirements for the award are established in critical areas of what is needed for a ready and trained unit for any mission."

Units under the 153rd's command include: Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Huron; Forward Support Company, Parkston and Huron; 842nd Engineer Company, Spearfish, Belle Fourche and Sturgis, 211th Engineer Company (SAPPER), Madison and De Smet; 155th Engineer Company, Rapid City and Wagner; 200th Engineer Company, Pierre, Chamberlain and Mobridge; and the 927th Engineer Detachment (Survey and Design Team), Huron.

The award is named after Maj. Gen. Milton A. Reckord, a veteran of World War I and World War II, former commander of the 29th Infantry Division and former adjutant general of Maryland.

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High resolution photos are available at <a href="www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotanationalguard">www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotanationalguard</a>



140825-Z-VL305-008: U.S. Army Capt. Thomas Wilcox, second from right, administrative officer in the South Dakota Army National Guard's 153rd Engineer Battalion, accepts the Major General Milton A. Reckord Award on behalf of the battalion during the 136th National Guard Association of the United States General Conference in Chicago, Aug. 25, 2014. The Milton A. Reckord Trophy is awarded to the outstanding battalion in each of the Army areas determined to have the highest level of training and readiness. Presenting the trophy are, from left, Maj. Gen. Deborah Ashenhurst, president of NGAUS, Lt. Gen. Michael S. Tucker, First U.S. Army commanding general, and Army National Guard Acting Director Maj. Gen. Judd Lyons. (U.S. Army National Guard photo/Released)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** Please contact Maj. Anthony Deiss at (605) 737-6721 or cell (605) 431-8753, or e-mail <a href="maj.sd.sdarng.list.pao@mail.mil">ng.sd.sdarng.list.pao@mail.mil</a>.